



**CITY OF MIAMI BEACH**  
**Office of the City Manager**  
**Letter to Commission No. 065-2005**

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**To:** Mayor David Dermer and  
Members of the City Commission

**Date:** March 4, 2005

**From:** Jorge M. Gonzalez  
City Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jorge", written over the printed name of the City Manager.

**Subject: WEEKLY UPDATE**

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The purpose of this LTC is to provide you with an update describing some of the areas the Administration has recently been focusing on:

**FY 2005/06 Budget** – Staff from the Office of Budget and Performance Improvement (OBPI) continue to meet with representatives from City Departments to continue preparing for the FY 2005/06 budget using the new Eden budget preparation module. Discussions with all City Departments will continue throughout the next several months to focus on the FY 2005/06 budget preparations.

**Miami Beach Community Survey** – The phone calls to residents started on February 5 and continued through February 15 with approximately 550 completed surveys. The calls resumed on March 2 and will continue until approximately 1,200 residents have been contacted. The business and community organization surveys are scheduled to begin next week.

**2005 Elections** – The City Clerk continues to work with the Elections Department to coordinate the City's efforts for the County-wide election taking place on March 8. City Hall and the North Shore Library have been serving as early voting sites since February 21 and will continue through March 6. All precincts throughout the City will be open on Election Day, March 8. Vote Miami Beach activities will continue this year and staff is working on activities that will promote voter registration in the City.

**Major Events Plan (MEP)** - Staff continued to plan and prepare for several major events that took place and will be taking place on Miami Beach. The Miami International Boat Show and the Yacht & Brokerage Show from February 18-21 drew a record number of attendees this year as did the South Beach Wine and Food Festival which took place from February 25-27. March will be a very busy month again this year with several special events taking place throughout the City. The Winter Music Conference, the world's largest dance music conference, celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and will take place on March 21 – 27 bringing an estimated 25,000 – 35,000 participants to Miami Beach.

**Public Safety** – Representatives from the Police Department attended an Internet Crimes Symposium sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. Staff from Neighborhood Services and Police Departments met on March 2 to continue to coordinate issues associated with the homeless population in Miami Beach. On March 2, representatives from the Police Department attended a Pinetree/La Gorce Neighborhood Association meeting to discuss crime trends and crime prevention in the area. On March 4, representatives from the Police Department attended a meeting at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement headquarters with representatives of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to discuss the potential problems associated with the pending release of refugees from a federal prison in Atlanta.

**Beachwalk Project** – Staff from the Public Works Department continues to work on finalizing the Beachwalk project, which is now nearly 85% complete. State of the art, environmentally friendly lighting has been installed along the path so as not to disturb nesting sea turtles and non-native vegetation has been replaced with native species along the dunes. Pedestrians, rollerbladers, and bicyclist are now able to use most of the path to exercise and travel between hotels and restaurants.

**Dune Restoration Project** - The Public Works Department was awarded \$200,000 from the Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond from Miami-Dade County to restore the dune system from 79<sup>th</sup> street to 22<sup>nd</sup> street. Work began in November 2004 and was recently completed last month. Non-native plants were removed, including Australian Pine and Scaevola, and replanted with Sea Oats, Railroad Vines, and Beach Sunflowers.

**Earth Day 2005** - In conjunction with the City Parks & Recreation Department, the Environmental Resources Management Division will be hosting the first annual Earth Expo on Miami Beach taking place on Earth Day, April 10 from 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. The Earth Expo will be free and open to the public and will create a forum for sustainable businesses and will provide exhibits on hybrid cars, green investing, energy efficient and water conservation products for the home, natural cosmetics, and organic foods. Attendees will also have the opportunity to participate in native plant identification workshops. Together these exhibits will address some of the more pressing environmental issues of our time – economic, social, and environmental.

**Miami Beach Regional Library** – Staff has been working with representatives from Miami Dade County to coordinate the Regional Library opening and ribbon cutting ceremonies on April 1 at 2:00 p.m. Other activities taking place over the opening weekend include an Author's evening scheduled for April 2 and a free family festival day on April 3. The new library includes a newly-ordered collection of 75,000 reading materials, a large auditorium, a coffee bar, a reading garden with fountains and a reading area for children.

**Parks & Recreation** - The "Movies in the Park" showing of *Shark Tales* on February 25 at the North Shore Park and Youth Center was a huge success with over 700 adults and children attending. An LTC with additional details about this event and the future of the "Movies in the Park" program was sent on March 4. Staff is working on the City's first ever Duathlon which will offer runners and swimmers of all ages a chance to compete on March 20 in Flamingo Park.

**County G.O. Bond Projects** – Staff and I met with representatives from the County on February 28 and then again amongst ourselves on March 1 to discuss funding and next steps involved with the various Miami Beach projects.

**Miami Beach Channel 20** – On March 1, I met with staff from the City Clerk's Office to discuss ways to further improve programming on channel 20 and implement newer technologies that will be beneficial to our viewing audience.

**Organizational Development** – Training on our new, enhanced customer service standards have begun with various City Departments. The goal of the training is to ensure that all employees receive the proper training and resources to be able to deliver outstanding customer service. Training will continue through the end of this month.

**Women's History Month** – March is Women's History Month and to commemorate, the City has coordinated the first-ever art exhibit by female artists currently on display in the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Gallery of City Hall. In addition, the City is partnering with the Commission on the Status of Women to host an event to present this year's "Women Worth Knowing" awards on March 22 at the South Beach Marriott. This year's honorees include Dr. Georgina Garcia, Elsie Sterling Howard and the Honorable Shelly Kravitz who were chosen for their contributions to the Miami Beach community.

**City's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration** – Staff is working on several initiatives to celebrate the City's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. With a proposed theme of *"Miami Beach, our vibrant, tropical, historic community...90+ years in the making"* several events are being planned that will take place over the course of the year. A historical exhibit from the City's archives will be on display beginning March 28 in the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Gallery. The Mayor's State of the City is scheduled for April 8 followed by a ceremonial birthday cake and the burial of a time capsule at City Hall. Throughout the year, activities and events will incorporate the City's birthday theme. The Miami Herald's Miami Beach Neighbors editorial staff has agreed to run articles throughout the year highlighting the City's history. The March 3 Neighbors included the first of these articles with a story on Avery Smith, the "father" of Miami Beach tourism. An LTC with additional details will be sent shortly.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me.